Holway could have chosen to imitate Slater’s more modest, hesitant style of argumentation, but instead he doubles down on his preferred theoretical approach in an epilogue in which he compares Achilles to another ancient exemplar — Socrates. Holway argues that the Platonic oeuvre is a ‘Trojan horse’ by which the heroic Greek culture of Homer has infiltrated Western culture in a new guise (p. 178). Holway interprets Socrates’ defence in the Apology as part of his ‘habitual, unprovoked attempts’ to undermine the authority of the laws of democratic Athens. However, the rampant use of qualifiers (‘may’, ‘might indeed’, ‘perhaps’) in the epilogue indicates that Holway feels himself to be on shaky ground in making these claims. The multivalent and complex figure of Socrates (filtered through the camera obscura of Plato and Xenophon) is contorted, and there are no obvious gains from this operation. Holway acknowledges some of the obstacles to his reading of Socrates, but ultimately this reviewer was left unconvinced and began to wonder whether the interpretive framework of attachment theory had been given too much influence within the argument.

Despite these problems, Holway’s book is to be recommended for the way it comes at well-worn material with a fresh perspective. More importantly, the book has much to teach us about the connection between familial and cultural violence, and the interpenetration of the micro and macro forces that shape human communities. If the micro-level forces are given a more serious treatment here than any macro forces, this is not so much a fatal flaw as a choice of focus. Future studies in this vein might attempt to do as the classicist Charles Segal once counselled: to combine structural and psychological approaches in order to take a fuller measure of the ‘multifaceted and multivalent nature’ of Greek society and poetry.39

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Historicism is a popular and widespread method in contemporary studies of Greek tragedy. Whether you seek to relate the plays to particular historical events, or whether (which is now more the fashion) to values and ideas, a starting assumption of criticism is that the plays must have made sense at the

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particular time and place of first performance. This first performance was as part of a coordinated tetralogy at the City Dionysia festival, held in Athens each year before an audience of several thousands.

Now the size and importance of this festival, and especially its political significance, have not gone unnoticed. Simon Goldhill in particular, in an influential article first published in 1987, gives an account of ceremonies performed at the festival and sets the plays within the corresponding ideological (for Goldhill, democratic) framework. In an article that appeared in 2004 I pointed out that the political force of these ceremonies is more imperial than democratic. In particular, ambassadors from around the Athenian empire came to Athens with the tribute money, which was then displayed in the theatre. It seemed to me in keeping with this external projection of Athens’ image that the role of Athens in tragedy is usually as a receiver of foreign suppliants. Athens is both the setting for almost all the so-called ‘suppliant plays’; and also pops up in cameo roles providing asylum to individuals such as Medea or Heracles.

Tzanetou’s book, which seeks to relate suppliant drama to the Athenian empire, is therefore an important and useful contribution. In a careful analysis of the plays she reveals something of the character of tragic Athens and of the decisions made. In general the judicious leadership of an Athenian king — a Theseus or Demophon — is key to the decision. The one suppliant drama not set at Athens (Aeschylus’ *Suppliants*) is the exception to prove the rule here: Pelasgus does not (like Athenian leaders in suppliant dramas) manage the risk of accepting suppliants through negotiation (p. 15). This element of leadership notwithstanding, in Athenian-set plays the suppliant tends to supplicate the city, not an individual, and the decision to receive suppliants is made in the name of all the Athenians. Finally, the tragic image of Athens, as a city willing to accept suppliants and to go to war if necessary in their defence, fosters an image of a powerful city willing to deploy its power to benefit weaker allies. By receiving suppliants the Athenians not only protect the liberty of others but also demonstrate their own freedom (pp. 79–80).

Tzanetou’s particular approach is, if anything, closer to the more old-fashioned type of historicism described above than to the ‘values and ideas’ approach. She may not always seek to relate the plays to historical events but there is a strong diachronic thread throughout her argument. She seeks to chart the development of Athenian ideology over the course of the second half of the fifth century by relating it to three plays, the subject of three substantive chapters in her book: Aeschylus’ *Eumenides* (458 BC), Euripides’ *Children of*...

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